THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to media reports, Pakistan has been providing USA with base facilities at a number of places, particularly along the Makran Coast, Peshawar and Karachi.

(c) and (d) Both the USA and Pakistan have denied the existence of any such bases in Pakistan. Government are, however, maintaining a constant vigil on all developments having a bearing on the country's security.

Troops Movement in Pak -occupied Kashmir

580. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be plesaed to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which apeoared in the Hindustan Times dated 16th October, 1987 to the effect that the pattern of troops movement in Pak-occupied Kashmir, too close to the onset of winter, has created apprehensions in responsible quarters that Pak may embrak on yet another adventurous action in snowbound heights during the course of this month;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what action Government have taken to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) Government have seen the media report but have no confirmed information to suggest any unusual movement on concentration of troops in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

(c) Government keep a close watch on all developments having a bearing on our security and take appropriate measures to ensure full defence preparedness

Irrigable capacity of the Brahmaputra

581. SHRI NAGEN SAIKIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the area of land in hectares being covered by the Brahmaputra in Assam;

(b) what measures Government propose to take to utilise these area for cultivation; and

(c) whether there is any alternate proposal other than the proposed dams, to tame the Brahmaputra and to prevent thereby floods and erosion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) About 56 lakh ha.

(b) Against the gross cropped area of 32.88 lakh ha., the ultimate irrigation potential in the basin has been assessed to be about 27 lakh ha. The irrigation potential achieved till the end of VIth Plan is 3.58 lakh ha while the target set for VIIth Plan is 4.09 lakh ha.

(c) Besides storage reservoirs, these include watershed management and river training works; and the short-term measures include embankments anti-erosion works and drainage schemes.

Electoral reforms

582. DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the electoral reforms proposed by Government of India; and

(b) whether proposed reforms include meeting of the election expenses of candidates to the Assemblies and Parliament by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDAWAJ): (a) and (b) The Election Commission has formulated various proposals for electoral reforms which are under consideration of the Government. A statement of such proposals was laid on the Table of the House in reply to Starred Question No. 181 for 17th November, 1986 and Unstarred Question No. 91 for 27th July, 1987. These proposals also include the proposal for financing of all legitimate election expenses by the State.

Electoral reforms

583. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been demand from various sections of the Society that the Centre may initiate immediate Legislative action on electoral reforms to cleanse the politics of the pernicious influence of money power; and

(b) whether Government propose to make poll reforms in the country on these lines and if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir. There have been demands for curbing the role of money power in elections.

(b) The Election Commission has also proposed as part of its proposal for electoral reforms that to deal with the problem of money power, it is necessary to evolve a scheme under which the burden of all legitimate election expenses could be shifted to States The Commission has observed that the whole subject merits an in-depth study. This proposal alongwith other proposals for electoral reforms are intended to be discussed with political parties before arriving at a final decision. These discussions have not taken place.

Surrender of Hyderabad House New Delhi

584. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has since been taken by Government to surrender Hyderabad House, New Delhi to the Andhra Pradesh State Government; and

(b) if not, what are the reasons for delay and by when Hyderabad House is likely to be surrendered to Andhra Pradesh Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): No, Sir.

(b) Hyderabad House is utilised and required for purposes of Government hospitality and Government accordingly plan to acquire the property from the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Mid term Appraisal of Seventh Plan

585. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken the task for mid-term appraisal of the Seventh Plan;

(b) if so, whether the process has since been completed; and

(c) if not, by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The mid-term appraisal of the Seventh Five Year Plan is underway.

(c) The mid-term appraisal is likely to be completed this year.